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United States Attorney
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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PICKARD AND APPERSON SENTENCED ON LSD CHARGES - LARGEST LSD LAB SEIZURE IN DEA HISTORY

TOPEKA, Kan. – United States Attorney Eric Melgren announced that **William Leonard Pickard**, 58, Mill Valley, California, and **Clyde Apperson**, 48, Sunnyvale, California, were sentenced today by U.S. District Judge Richard D. Rogers. Pickard was sentenced to life imprisonment without parole. Apperson was sentenced to 30 years imprisonment without parole.

Melgren said that Pickard and Apperson were found guilty on March 31, 2003, following an eleven week jury trial of one count of conspiracy to manufacture and distribute more than 10 grams of LSD from August 1999 through November 2000 and one count of possession with the intent to distribute more than 10 grams of LSD on November 6, 2000.

Melgren stated that according to court testimony, this was the **single largest seizure of an operable LSD lab in the history of the Drug Enforcement Administration**. DEA agents seized approximately 41.3 kilograms (90.86 pounds) of LSD, approximately 97.5 kilograms (214.5 pounds) of lysergic acid, a precursor to LSD, approximately 23.6 kilograms (51.92 pounds) of iso-LSD, a by-product from the manufacture of LSD and 19 kilograms (41.8 pounds) of ergocristine, a precursor to LSD with the ability to create an additional 12.4 kilograms (27.28 pounds) of LSD.

Further trial evidence established that in the history of DEA there have only been four seizures of complete LSD labs and **three of these seizures involved Pickard and Apperson** including a lab in Mountainview, California in 1998, a lab in Oregon in 1996, and this lab in Wamego, Kansas.

Melgren said that according to court testimony, on October 31, 2000, DEA agents conducted a search of a silo site near Wamego, Kansas, and found a LSD lab packed in storage boxes. On November 6, 2000, Pickard and Apperson were moving the illegal lab when they

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were stopped by the Kansas Highway Patrol. Apperson was arrested driving the rental truck containing the lab. Pickard, who was driving a Buick LeSabre, fled on foot and was arrested the next day at a farm outside Wamego. Fourteen canisters of a chemical required to produce LSD valued at over \$1,000,000 were found at the missile silo. According to court testimony, Pickard and Apperson previously manufactured LSD in Santa Fe, New Mexico, where every five weeks the lab produced about 2.2 pounds of LSD, approximately 10 million doses that cost less than one cent a dose to produce and would sell for as much as \$10 a dose. According to court testimony, the LSD was shipped to California and later to Europe for distribution.

Melgren commended the excellent work of the Drug Enforcement Administration, DEA Task Force, and Kansas Highway Patrol with special recognition to Special Agent Karl Nichols, DEA, Special Agent Roger Hanzlik, DEA Task Force, Ralph Sorrell, Leavenworth Police Department/DEA Task Force, and O.C.D.E.T.F. in this investigation and Assistant U.S. Attorney Greg Hough in this prosecution. O.C.D.E.T.F., Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force, is a Congressionally funded task force with multi-agency federal, state and local members dedicated to investigating and prosecuting large-scale narcotics and money laundering cases nationally.

“Our nation’s war on drugs is not limited to major metropolitan areas or border states. Manufacturers and traffickers of illegal drugs are increasingly moving to less populated areas in an attempt to avoid detection,” Melgren said. “This case clearly demonstrates that moving such illegal activity to Kansas is a mistake. Due to the cooperative efforts of our federal, state and local law enforcement agencies, they will be caught. Due to the commitment of my office, they will be aggressively prosecuted. Due to Kansans’ common sense and respect for the law, those who are guilty of such activity will be convicted. And due to the federal sentencing guidelines, they will be sentenced to significant time in prison. The message from this case is clear: drug dealers and manufacturers may not consider Kansas a place where they may get away with their illegal activities.”

DEA Special Agent in Charge William J. Renton, Jr. stated, “the sentencing of William Pickard and Clyde Apperson brings to conclusion their significant role in the international production and distribution of LSD. These defendants were proven, by overwhelming evidence, to be responsible for the illicit manufacture of the majority of the LSD sold in this nation. The proof of the significance of these prosecutions and convictions lies in the fact that LSD availability in the United States was reduced by 95 % in the two years following their arrest. The Drug Enforcement Administration is proud to have led this historic investigation, and to have had the close cooperation of our partners in state and local law enforcement. I congratulate U.S. Attorney Eric Melgren and his staff for the outstanding prosecution conducted in this matter.”

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